

\$2 A YEAR IN ADVANCE.

NUMBER 8

A Lover's Ruse.

They had a young maid-of-all-work named Marie de La Font. Marie was a sweet, pretty girl, and lively and piquant in her manners, although modest in the extreme, and it was the reason that the two brothers kept her in their employ. They knew that she was frugal, economical, and dressed in the most moderate manner imaginable. One day Marie surprised her employers informing them that a young architect, resided in Paris, had asked her to marry. They strove to dissuade her from accepting the offer of marriage, but she told them that she could not be happy unless that she became the wife of her dear Henri. So, quite against her desire, she thought it was

One day during the interval the two brothers sold some valuable real estate, which they owned jointly, and the sum realized amounted to 106,000 francs. It was all in bills on the bank of France, and was paid too for deposit the same afternoon. Night came and as the old bachelors seldom had such a large amount in the house, they were considerably concerned lest robbers should at-

The residence of the old man was not far from the main road, and stood near the river, Seine. It was a lonely, gloomy location, and on the night in question the winds swept through the tall larches surrounding the mansion with doleful

Both the bachelors were terribly frightened, and while one commenced to open the door the other began removing a tile from the hearth to hide

"You have a gun," said Marie; "take it and shoot the villains." But the two trembling men paid heed to her advice. "Cowards!" said the brave girl,

Just then there came a heavy
ash from the apartments below.

"We shall all be murdered in our beds," said the girl. "We will be and by the police in the morning with our throats cut from ear to ear. These fools give me the gun." She seized the double-barreled gun that lay upon the shelf, and started down stairs, while the two frightened

He watched her without saying a word. Presently bang went the gun. A groan was heard. Bang! went the second barrel, and a screech of pain resounded through the house that caused the blood of the brothers to run cold.

rie came tripping upstairs, but her face wore a determined dissatisfied look. She asked for powder and shells to reload, which were furnished; but before she finished loading foot-pops were heard retreating from the

to one sept in the house that night, nor were they again molested. At early dawn, on going down stairs, a pool of blood on the hall floor showed that one robber, at least, had been seriously, if not mortally, wounded; and it was plain to see by the bloody path in the earth that the victim had been dragged to the river. There were marked the whole distance, and the police were at once put on the alert for the arrest of the living

But all efforts proved vain, and the recovery of the young girl was dismissed far and near.

The grateful bachelors were so overwhelmed that they offered to

"Ah! messieurs," replied she affectionately "how can I leave you? you may again be attacked by robbers."
"But we will not, nevertheless, and between you and happiness," he replied. "Here are thirty thousand francs—you have saved our lives, and richly deserve the money. You choose to live in this house with your husband, we will repair

Henri married Marie, and they adopted the dower and the house. Years passed, and recently the facts of this midnight robbery came to light. Both of the old back-
 were dead and had willed Ma-

He told her, however, that the robbers were not plural. Henri acted the burglar, the blood was from a man killed for the purpose, and the whole was but a ruse of the two lovers to open the hearts and purses of the married ones.